

A

# REVIEW

OF THE

# STATE

OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Thursday, December 16. 1708.

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**H**AVING said something in the *Review* of No. 103. on the Subject of the Death of his Royal Highness the Prince, and seem'd to promise something farther upon that Subject: I have been seiz'd with the most impertinent Scribblers in the World upon that Promise, and Verses enumerable sent me to publish; but my Rhiming Days being almost done, and not thinking my self qualify'd for such a Subject, I have hitherto avoided saying any thing, rather than to do, as I see most have done, whose Performances on that Subject seem to be

the worst, generally speaking, that ever the World saw on such an Occasion.

Another Thing also has prevented me in this Case, *Viz.* That really my Thoughts about Dying differ a little from most Part of the common Notions of Things; and I think, Elegies and black Cloaths very incongruous Ceremonies to the Affair of Death—— Indeed I am not for ringing of Bells, and making Bonfires, when great or good Men die. — But it ever was my Opinion, That

Sighs

Sighs for departed Friends are senseless Things,  
 To them no Help, to us no Comfort bring ;  
 Ashes and Sack-Cloths Cries, and renting Cloths,  
 Our Folly more than our Affection shows ;  
 But if you will like Men and Christians grieve  
 When others die, be thankful you're alive.

Nor is this all ; but I carry it something farther, *Viz.* That Death is the greatest Human Felicity of GOD's Creation, speaking as to this Life ; that all Nature must be new form'd, new Laws given to the Creation, and the whole Scheme of things be alter'd, if Death were not its full Period—Death keeps the World in constant Youth, removes the Miseries of our Friends out of our Sight, as well as shakes off their Infirmities and Uneasinesses; puts an End to Distractions, to Crime, to ungovern'd Pride, inveterate Envyings, irreconcilable Breaches, and to all the Follies as well as Miseries of Life—And the wise Man therefore lays it down as a Maxim, *That the Day of our Burial is better than the Day of our Birth*—However, as the Gentlemen are resolv'd to have my Notions in Rhime, I shall, to gratify their Fancy, give them a Fragment of some Thoughts, which I have more of by me upon this Subject ; whether they shall be ever finish'd or no, I cannot promise.

Decree'd by Heaven in Mercy to Mankind,  
 Our Troubles are to Life's short Length confin'd ;  
 Want, WEAKNESS, Pain, Disease and Sorrow have  
 Their General full *Quietus* in the Grave ;  
*The Living* never shou'd the Dead lament ;  
 Death's our Reward, and not our Punishment.

In Age and full Decay grown Nature's Jest,  
 Shatter'd with Time, and with Distemper prest ;  
 Could not the Soul shake off the Load, and die,  
 What Tongue could represent our Misery ?

The crouded World with Age and Stench oppress'd,  
 A vile Infected INN would poison all her Guests ;  
*An Hospital* made loathsom with Increase,  
 And Life the most Incurable Disease ;  
*Youth* would die living, poison'd by the Air,  
*Age* would live dying, and in Pain despair ;  
 Hell would be here, for Hell's a full Decay,  
 Th' imprison'd Soul wou'd think't a Hell to stay,  
 Struggle to break the nauseous tottering Cage,  
 And fly from its worst Misery, OLD AGE.



*The greatest Monarch with the brightest Crown,  
 Could he not lay his mighty Trophies down,  
 Grown Vile in Age, and Loathsome in Decay,  
 By Day would curse the Night, by Night the Day;  
 A Burthen to himself, chain'd down to Life,  
 Loaded with Years, Disease, Despair and Grief;  
 Unable to support his Misery,  
 He'd lay down all his Crowns for LEAVE to die.*

*Heaven gives this only Solace to Mankind,  
 That the best Fate has better still behind,  
 And every Toil shall cease, and every Sorrow end.*

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*Then tho' we may the publick Loss condole,  
 And sympathize with ANN's afflicted Soul;  
 Yet let us not with ill instructed Breath,  
 Blaspheme the Solid Happiness of Death;  
 For why should Death afflict her Majesty,  
 Since 'tis her only Bliss, that She Her self CAN DIE.*

If I should make any more Elegies, they would not please you, Gentlemen; if I should speak well of the Dead, you'll say 'tis to flatter and compliment the Living; if I should speak ill of him, *I must lie*, and debauch the Paper and your Ears in the malicious Invention—— I won't do the first to the greatest Monarch, and I can't do the last to the meanest Subject.

Again, if I should go about to write upon the Death of the Prince, I shall only apply my self to you that are left, who by your Factions and Party-Divisions grieve and torment the Soul of your Sovereign, more than the Loss of her nearest Enjoyments can do; and if you have a Mind to any of this, by Way of

Elegy upon the Prince, perhaps you may have it—— And perhaps you may, whether you like it or no. For certainly, *and I cannot take a better Time to tell you of it*, the Breaches of our publick Peace, the Strife, the Heat between Parties, the High Flying and Low-Flying, the Tacking, and projecting Destruction for one another, that has afflicted this Nation ever since the first Year of her Majesty's Reign, have been the greatest Affliction of her Reign, and must have touch'd the QUEEN's Peace, nearer than any other Grief her Majesty has been exercis'd with; and ought to be consider'd by those that have a true Concern for the Repose of their Sovereign.

A D.